

**RAMSEY TOWN COMMISSIONERS**

**[ PUBLIC ]**

The Monthly Board Meeting of the Ramsey Town Commissioners was held in the Boardroom of the Town Hall and using a telephone conference call system on Wednesday, 15<sup>th</sup> July, 2020, at 7.00 p.m.

**Present:** Mr. A. G. Cowie, Mrs. J. Wedgwood, Rev Canon N. D. Greenwood, J. McGuinness, A. J. Oldham, L. Parker, F. B. R. Williams and W. G. Young.  
Mrs. M. Quayle and Messrs' W. L. Hankin and N. P. Howard by telephone conference.

The Town Clerk, Deputy Town Clerk, Finance Officer, Technical Services Manager and Minute Clerk were in attendance.

**(2020/21:045) Minutes:**

Resolved: That the Minutes of the Board Meetings held on 17<sup>th</sup> June, 2020, be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

**(2020/21:046) Matters Arising:**

Mr. McGuinness asked if any response had been received from the Department of Infrastructure with regard to the West Quay development proposals. The Town Clerk advised that the Department will investigate options with regard to lack of parking and has asked if they could supply drawings for display at the Town Hall for comments by the public. Members asked if the drawings could also be displayed at the Courthouse.

Mr. Hankin asked about alternative parking provision to which the Town Clerk advised that no comment could be made at this stage owing to the Department's on-going negotiations.

**(2020/21:047) Chairman's Report:**

The Chairman verbally reported on the success of recent events in Ramsey - the Purple Helmets, at which it was a pleasure to welcome His Excellency and Lady Gozney and Ramsey Rocks. Thanks were conveyed to all who helped in any way to ensure the success of these events.

The Chairman also referred to the presentation of the Town Cup Golf Competitions. Mr. Oldham referred to the poor condition of the actual Town Cup and asked if it could be refurbished or replaced. The Town Clerk was asked to look into this.



**Finance and General Purposes:**

**(2020/21:048) Town Clerk's Report - Vacancy North Ward:**

Resolved: To note the Town Clerk's report dated 30<sup>th</sup> June, 2020, advising of the status of membership of the Commission, following the resignation of Mr. Monk and having regard to the emergency powers introduced owing to the Coronavirus pandemic.

**2020/21:049) Finance Officer General Report:**

Resolved: To note and approved the Finance Officer's general report dated 8<sup>th</sup> July, 2020, subject to the following:-

*Rates* - the Finance Officer advised that Treasury will provide rate income collected at similar intervals as previous years. Mr. McGuinness indicated that although rate income will be in flux there will be no immediate cash flow issues.

**(2020/21:050) Housing and Property Manager's Report - Rent Arrears Update:**

Resolved: To note the Housing and Property Manager's report dated 7<sup>th</sup> July, 2020, advising of the status of arrears of rent as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic. Mr. McGuinness expressed the hope that people would be getting any help needed. Mr. Parker drew attention to the paragraph within the report "that the Commission's staff are always available to discuss rent arrangements and payment plans, working with any tenant who might be finding payment difficult for any reason.

The Finance Officer indicated that there are a few tenants who will not come into the Town Hall but reminded members that the "rent holiday" does not mean that the debt will disappear.

**Works and Development:**

**(2020/21:051) Town Clerk's Report – 3 Legs North Barrule:**

Members considered the Town Clerk's report dated 29<sup>th</sup> June, 2020, concerning the 3 Legs of Man created on North Barrule.

Resolved: That, following a proposal by Mr. Williams, seconded by Mrs. Wedgwood the Commission do not withdraw their interested party status. The proposal was carried by 9 votes to 2, Messrs' Cowie and McGuinness voting against.

The Town Clerk advised members that the complaint against the development of the 3 Legs is already in place and the Commission would continue to be informed of whatever decision the Planning Committee ultimately makes in this matter.



**(2020/21:052) Technical Services Manager's Report - Planning Applications:**

Members agreed that the Technical Services Manager's Report dated 9<sup>th</sup> July, 2020, detailing planning applications received from the Department of the Environment, Food and Agriculture, under the planning consultation procedures, be noted and no objections be made to such applications, subject to the following:-

REF NO: 3743 **Amended Plan**  
P.A. NO.: **20/00069/B**  
PROPOSED: Erection of three attached dwellings with associated off road parking  
NOTES: P.A. in Detail  
SITE: **Land at the junction of May Hill and Glen Elfin Road, Ramsey.**

Members were informed that the amended plans show no change to the position of the bin store but have reduced the parking provision. It was proposed by Mr. Williams seconded by Mr Cowie and agreed by 10 votes to 1, Mr. Howard voting against, that an objection be made to the application on the grounds that parking does not meet the required standards.

REF NO: 3783  
P.A. NO.: **20/00562/B**  
PROPOSED: Erection of a rear extension  
NOTES: P.A. in Detail  
SITE: **Pine View, 3, Beaumont Road, Ramsey.**

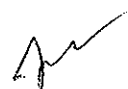
It was proposed by Mr. Williams seconded by Mr. Cowie and agreed unanimously that an observation be submitted with regard to uncertainty as to whether the extension will go to the boundary of the property and therefore if the foundations would extend to the neighbouring garden which could be problematic.

**Housing and Property:**

**(2020/21:053) Town Clerk's Report – Consultation - Landlord Registration Bill**

Members considered the Town Clerk's report dated 1<sup>st</sup> July, 2020, concerning the consultation with regard to the Landlord Registration Bill. General discussion ensued during which members expressed various concerns that the proposals would be difficult to enforce; disenfranchise smaller landlords; may result in increased rentals; offer no encouragement for landlords to comply; cause an unnecessary additional layer of government; cause worry to tenants.

Resolved: That, following a proposal by Mr. Cowie, seconded by Mr. McGuinness and agreed unanimously, that the Commission submit a general response of their belief that the Bill is over bureaucratic and complicated and they would prefer simpler measures to be introduced.



**(2020/21:054) Housing and Property Manager's Report – Air Sourced Heat Pumps Update:**

Resolved: To note and approve the Housing and Property Manager's report dated 9<sup>th</sup> July, 2020, concerning the approved borrowing powers and progress with regard to the installation of air sourced heat pumps at Close Caarjys.

**Parks and Leisure:**

**(2020/21:055) Housing and Property Manager's Report – Water-play Area Mooragh Park:**

Resolved: To note and approve the Housing and Property Manager's report dated 26<sup>th</sup> June, 2020, concerning the upgrading of water-play equipment in the Mooragh Park and delays caused because of restrictions in place because of the Coronavirus pandemic. Mr. Cowie advised that certain exemptions with regard to travelling to the Island are in place and he would discuss the matter with the Housing and Property Manager.

**Any other Business**

**(2020/21:056) Representative Report - Northern Local Authorities Swimming Pool Board:**

Mr. McGuinness presented a verbal report advising that the LED lights have been installed and these have improved the lighting and will result in considerable cost savings. Mr. McGuinness took the opportunity to thank the Board's staff. Mr. McGuinness was able to confirm that the pool would be open over the August bank holiday, but it was possible that the hours might not be as usual.

**(2020/21:057) Switch-On Christmas Lighting:**

Mr. Hankin referred to the decision made by Douglas Corporation not to have a grand switch-on for their Christmas lights and suggested that the Commission should take the opportunity to make the Ramsey Switch-on a special occasion.

The Deputy Town Clerk informed members that he would be presenting a report on proposals to the August meeting, and invited members to inform him of any ideas/comments they might have.



**(2020/21:058) Thanks:**

Mr. Parker sought permission to bring part of the Minutes of the Housing Committee, which did not compromise tenant identity or any details about tenants into public. The Chairman permitted such action, and as a result Mr. Parker read a statement which thanked the housing staff for all they did during the Covid Lockdown in communicating with vulnerable tenants and liaising assistance for those needing it.

The Chairman expanded the thanks to include the “whole team at the Commissioners”.

Mr. McGuinness took the opportunity to convey thanks to the Deputy Town Clerk, Mezzeron, Ramsey Rugby Club and all the musicians whose work and co-operation ensured the success of Ramsey Rocks.

**(2020/21:059) White Lines:**

Mr. Parker asked if the Department of Infrastructure could be requested to reinstate white line markings to indicate parking bays in Parliament Square/Street. Mr. Cowie undertook to convey the request to the Department.

The Chairman closed the public session at 8.02 p.m. and moved directly to private business

The following items were considered in private the detail of which, having regard to data protection, matters affecting persons who cannot be named, etc., is not as extensive as that contained in minutes of matters discussed in public.

**(2020/21:060) Minutes:**

Resolved: To note, for record purposes, that no minutes of the Board Meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> June, 2020, were recorded in private.

**Matters for Information:**

**(2020.21:061) Minutes Meetings Housing Committee:**

Resolved: To note the Minutes of meeting of the Housing Committee held on 7<sup>th</sup> July, 2020, subject to the following:-

*Clause 02a) Mayfield Sheltered Housing* - Mr. Cowie expressed concern that work was described as “going-well” as it is understood there was a delay, and indicated that he would prefer the word “now” to be added. Whilst it was noted that the scheme was not technically that of the Commission the Board were appreciative of the update as there was a “knock-on” effect to the Commission’s housing proposals for Close Woirrey.

*Clause 05d) - ... Additional Resident* - Mr. McGuinness queried the history of this matter and expressed concern that circumstances might be being manipulated to ensure qualification for housing. The Town Clerk undertook to clarify the circumstances with the Housing and Property Manager.

**(2020/21:062) On-Going Matters “Action Tracker”:**

Resolved: To note the “Action Tracker” to 15<sup>th</sup> July, 2020, included within the agenda and the following comments made thereon, and accepting that some matters may be referred to in other sections of these minutes:-

- *Shoprite Group Station Road* - the Town Clerk undertook to re-engage with the company;
- *Ramsey North Beach* - the Deputy Town Clerk advised that he will be reporting to the August meeting on this matter;
- *Vollan / Balladoole Odours* - noted that no recent complaints received but that the Department’s consultants had been unable to travel to the Island because of Covid restrictions;
- *Mart Site* - to be removed;
- *Toilet Art* - the Deputy Town Clerk advised that a design competition is being launched by the Arts Council in September and that the Lead Member for Parks and Leisure will be a judge;
- *Electric Vehicle Charging Points* - the Deputy Town Clerk advised that the Commission need to be aware of the points and fittings as they are used as an electrical supply for event;
- *Boathouse Concession* - to be removed;
- *Covid 19 Rent Holiday* - to be removed;
- *Local Elections Act* - to be removed.

The Register of Ruinous Property and Unsightly Buildings appended to the Action Tracker was noted, subject to the following:-

- *Bleak House* - the Town Clerk informed members of his understanding that the interest in part of the property has been sold; he undertook to communicate with other parties to obtain the current situation.

**Finance and General Purposes:**

**(2020/21:063) Town Clerk’s Report - Feedback and Complaints Policy:**

Members considered the Town Clerk’s report dated 8<sup>th</sup> July, 2020, to which was appended the draft Feedback and Complaints’ Policy, which had been presented to a previous meeting of the Commission’s Policy Committee.

Resolved: That, following a proposal by Mr. McGuinness, seconded by Mr. Parker and agreed that the Feedback and Complaints Policy be adopted, subject to the inclusion of provision to report matters to the Commission’s Establishment Committee and to extend the acknowledgement period from 2 to 5 working days.

**(2020/21:064) Finance Officer's Report:**

Members noted and approved the Finance Officer's Report dated 8<sup>th</sup> July, 2020, subject to the following:-

*Estimates and Revenue Expenditure* - Mr. Cowie queried the amount expended on labour costs and was advised that this was because of duties undertaken because of Covid 19 and the allocation of expenditure would be reviewed later in the financial year.

*Aged Debtors* - a query with regard to a specific debt was answered to members' satisfaction and the Finance Officer advised members that commercial debts are now being paid. The Finance Officer reminded members of his willingness to enter into negotiation with any debtors struggling to make payments.

**(2020/21:065) Town Clerk's Report - Consultation - Equality Act 2017:**

Members considered the Town Clerk's report dated 1<sup>st</sup> July, 2020, concerning the consultation with regard to the Code of Practice on Equal Pay.

Resolved: That, following a proposal by Mr. McGuinness, seconded by Mr. Cowie and the Commission is in agreement with equality of pay and because salaries are set by a graded process inequality is not applicable. Members agreed with Mr. McGuinness's proposal.

Mr. Cowie cautioned as to the impact of claims under UK legislation about which the Commission should remain aware.

**Works and Development:**

**(2020/21:066) Town Clerk's Report - Development at Caines' Yard:**

Members considered the Town Clerk's report dated 8<sup>th</sup> July, 2020, with attached illustrations of proposals for the redevelopment of Caines' Yard Shipyard Road, Ramsey, in respect of which the developer is seeking the Commission's comments.

Mr. Williams informed members that the Commission's concerns with regard to the bin provision would appear to have been adequately addressed and therefore proposed the Commission would withdraw their objection to the development. The proposal was seconded by Mr. Parker.

Mr. McGuinness proposed an addition that the withdrawal be on the basis of the amended plan. This was seconded by Mr. Williams and agreed by 10 votes to 1, Mr. Hankin voting against.

Mr. Oldham queried if the plan might be put on public display, and the Town Clerk advised that the developer had offered to provide plans for public display at the town hall prior to the planning application amendment being submitted which would be arranged.

**(2020/21:0067) Town Clerk's Report - Officer Reporting of Planning Breaches:**

Members discussed the Town Clerk's report dated 30<sup>th</sup> June, 2020, concerning the possibility of the Commission's staff undertaking responsibility for reporting breaches of planning. Members raised various concerns but were generally in agreement to the principle of officers reporting planning breaches.

Resolved: That following a proposal by Mr. McGuinness and agreed by general consensus the Town Clerk prepare a Policy Document in respect of Officers Reporting of Planning Breaches and attention be drawn therein also to the public's right to report suspected breaches directly to the Planning Authority.

**(2020/21:068) Town Clerk's Report - Planning Breaches:**

Members considered the Town Clerk's report dated 8<sup>th</sup> July, 2020, concerning possible breaches of planning conditions in respect of a business being operated at Gladstone Park and at West Quay.

Resolved: That, following a proposal by Mr. Williams seconded by Mr. McGuinness and agreed by 10 votes to 1, Mr. Young voting against, a formal complaint about the possible breach at Gladstone Park be made.

Members were informed that it was possible that the development at West Quay may only involve "works" of a temporary nature. It was further resolved by Mr. Cowie, seconded by Mr. Williams and agreed that the temporary nature of this matter be investigated and if not compliant with current planning restrictions the matter be reported.

**(2020/21:069) Town Clerk's Report - West Ramsey Development:**

Resolved: To note the Town Clerk's report dated 1<sup>st</sup> July, 2020, concerning the wish of developers at West Ramsey to meet the Commission and in respect of which a special Board Meeting has been scheduled to take place on Monday, 20<sup>th</sup> July, 2020. Members agreed to have regard to the possible designation of the former railway line as a potential pedestrian walkway.

**(2020/21:070) Technical Services Manager's Report - Christmas Lights:**

Members considered the Technical Services Manager's report dated 7<sup>th</sup> July, 2020, detailing costs for the provision of decorative lighting at Ramsey Courthouse.

Resolved: That, following a proposal by Mr. Williams, seconded by Mr. McGuinness and agreed by 10 votes to 1, Mr. Cowie voting against, that the lights for the Courthouse be purchased.

It was further resolved that the Technical Services Manager report further on additional features that might enhance the festive lighting at other areas of the town.



### **Housing and Property:**

#### **(2020/21:071) Town Clerk's Report - Manx Deaf Society Use of Town Hall:**

Members considered the Town Clerk's report dated 25<sup>th</sup> June, 2020, concerning the request made by the Manx Deaf Society to use facilities at the Town Hall to facilitate lip-reading classes.

Resolved: That, following a proposal by Mr. McGuinness, seconded by Mrs. Wedgwood and agreed, permission be granted at the existing charitable concessionary hire rates, including that for pre-paid block bookings.

### **Parks and Leisure:**

#### **(2020/21:072) Deputy Town Clerk's Report - Events Update Weekend:**

Members' considered the Deputy Town Clerk's report dated 9<sup>th</sup> July, 2020, and the update thereto dated 15<sup>th</sup> July, 2020, titled "Events Update" concerning events proposed to be staged over the "SuperManx" Bank Holiday weekend 28<sup>th</sup> - 31<sup>st</sup> August, 2020, and other events earlier in August.

The events were discussed in the order detailed within the report with the following decisions:-

- **Ramsey Rocks** - it was recognised that it was not viable to hold this event;
- **Mooragh Park Family Fun Day** - it was proposed by Mr. Parker, seconded by Mr. Williams and agreed that the event be held on Monday 31<sup>st</sup> August. It was noted that Government grant might be available to meet 50% of the estimated total cost of approximately £5,500;
- **V.J. Day Tea Party** - Proposed by Mr. Parker seconded by Mr. Cowie and agreed to provide permit the use of the Courthouse and provide support for this event on Sunday, 16<sup>th</sup> August including paying for the "rides" to be provided. Members were informed that the "ride" operators undertake their own risk assessment. The Finance Officer was requested to check with our insurers concerning inclement weather contingency.
- **Vintage Motorcycle Club Rally** - Proposed by Mr. Williams, seconded by Mr. Cowie and agreed to permit the event at the Mooragh Park and provide logistical support to the Rally to be held on 5<sup>th</sup> August, 2020;
- **Ramsey Bike Show** - Proposed by Mr. Oldham, seconded by Mr. Hankin and agreed to permit use of the Mooragh Park for the event on the 23<sup>rd</sup> August. Mr. Parker declared an interest.
- **Cancer Awareness** - it was proposed by Mr. Oldham seconded by Mr. Cowie and agreed to permit Isle of Man Anti-Cancer to site their cancer awareness information van on Station Road Car Park on 9<sup>th</sup> September.



**Any Other Business:**

**(2020/21:073) Town Clerk's Report - HSBC Facility Agreement:**

Members considered the Town Clerk's report dated 15<sup>th</sup> July, 2020, concerning the Framework Agreement entered into in 2015 with HSBC Bank and advising that Treasury has entered into negotiation with that bank concerning extension of and amendments to the agreement. The Attorney General's Chambers have received from the bank's solicitors a draft Amendment and Restatement Agreement concerning which it was noted Treasury has no substantive comments on the draft.

Resolved: That following a proposal by Mr. McGuinness, seconded by Mr. Williams and agreed that the Commission is agreeable to the content of the Amendment and Restatement Agreement and will respond to the requested items.

**(2020/21:074) Deputy Town Clerk's Report - Town Branding:**

Members considered the Deputy Town Clerk's report dated 15<sup>th</sup> July, 2020, concerning the Town Branding exercise undertaken by the Department for Enterprise. Members were informed that the Ramsey Chamber of Commerce's preferred logo differed from that of the Commission.

Resolved: That following a proposal by Mr. McGuinness seconded by Mr. Hankin and agreed that the decision as to which logo be used be left with the Department. It was suggested that facilities be made available at the Town Hall, if required, to enable the Department to display both logos and allow the public to indicate their preferred option.

**(2020/21:075) Pride of Ramsey Award:**

Mr. McGuinness made reference to the "Pride of Ramsey Award", usually presented at the Chairman's end of term reception and suggested a possible nominee. Mr Hankin referred to a nominee he had submitted some months ago.

The Chairman indicated that all nominees would be fully considered if it is decided to again present the award.

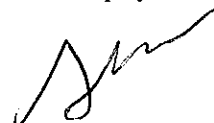
**Matters of Establishment:**

**(2020/21:076) Minutes Establishment Committee:**

Resolved: To note and approve the Minutes of the meetings of the Establishment Committee held on 10<sup>th</sup> June, 2020, and 13<sup>th</sup> July, 2020.

Mr. McGuinness made reference to the imminent retirement of the Works Supervisor, Mr. Paul Cowen, and expressed the Commission's good wishes to him.

The meeting closed at 9.58 p.m. giving a time of 3 hours for the payment of attendance allowances.



Chairman.